

27 MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL, SCIENCE AND BYELAW COMMITTEE held at the Strathmore Hotel, Morecambe on 2nd February 2016

PRESENT – MEMBERS

Mr R. Graham	(Chairman)	MMO appointee (Commercial)
Mr C. Booth		MMO appointee (Marine Science/Environment)
Mr T. Jones		MMO appointee (Commercial/Aquaculture)
Mr B. Leigh		MMO appointee (Anglers and Recreation)
Mr S. J. Manning		MMO appointee (Commercial)
Councillor A. J. Markley		Cumbria County Council
Mr K. Thompson		MMO appointee (Commercial/Aquaculture)
Ms H. Ake		Natural England
Mr D. Howarth		MMO (Officer)

NWIFCA OFFICERS ATTENDING

CEO, Head of Enforcement, Clerk, Senior Scientist

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Dr E. Baxter	MMO appointee (Marine Environment)
Mr C. Lumb	Natural England (Officer)
Mr S. Mounsey	Environment Agency (Officer)
Mr D. Ward	MMO (Officer)
Mr D. Bedworth	Environment Agency (Officer)

28 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (Agenda Item 1)

1. The Chairman welcomed Mr D. Howarth (MMO) and Ms H. Ake (Natural England).
2. Comments on the agenda from Dr Baxter were tabled.

29 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTEREST IN AGENDA ITEMS (Agenda Item 2)

Agenda Item 5. Bivalve Mollusc Working Group – 18th January 2016 meeting. Mr T. Jones, Mr S. J. Manning, K. Thompson,
Agenda Item 6. Cockle and Mussel Byelaw Review. Mr T. Jones, Mr S. J. Manning, Mr K. Thompson
Agenda Item 8. Science Summary Report. Mr T. Jones, Mr S. J. Manning

30 TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF THE TSB COMMITTEE HELD ON 6TH NOVEMBER 2015 (Agenda Item 3)

RESOLVED. To approve and sign the minutes as a correct record.

31 MATTERS ARISING (Agenda Item 4)

Minute No. 25. **Resolved:** Byelaw 8 (Prohibition of Foul Hooking) will be progressed and advertised together with other byelaws in order to reduce advertising costs.

Byelaw 2 (Vessel Size). No further progress has been made with this byelaw.

32 BIVALVE MOLLUSC WORKING GROUP (Agenda Item 5)

The latest draft of the Morecambe Bay Mussel Management Plan was discussed.

A draft Cockle Management Plan was circulated to BMWG members for comments before the next meeting in April. Changes to the representation on the group are being considered.

Issues raised: data on bird food requirements, the decision-making process, setting restrictions on seed mussel dredge fishery and research proposals.

Councillor Markley proposed that Recommendation 2 be amended to include the word draft. The proposal was seconded by Mr. Thompson.

RESOLVED

1. To approve continuation of BMWG to complete separate cockle and mussel management plans for Morecambe Bay and the Duddon Estuary.
2. The BMWG continue drafting the Morecambe Bay Mussel Management Plan.

33 **COCKLE AND MUSSEL BYELAW REVIEW (Agenda Item 6)**

Proposed revisions to Byelaw 3 (Cockle and Mussel Permit Scheme) were discussed:

1. extending the provision for commercial areas,
2. introduction of a regulation and permit scheme for shellfish buyers in the District
3. removal of vessel safety requirements from the byelaw.
4. Changes to the waiting list to include young people from the age of 13 are also proposed.
5. The requirement to take the Foreshore Gatherer's course will remain.

MMO has been consulted on the draft. Mr Jones requested a copy of the MMO advice. The Marine and Coastguard Agency has been consulted on removal of the vessel safety regulations.

Further stakeholder consultation will continue before the byelaw is made 3 stakeholder meetings are planned.

Mrs Butler had objected by email to the Trading permit and £500 fee.

CEO pointed out that the June meeting would be the last opportunity to make the byelaw in time for it to be implemented from 1st September.

RESOLVED. To approve further development of the byelaw taking account of comments from stakeholders, partners and MMO.

34 **BASS UPDATE (Agenda Item 7)**

New bass regulations will apply in 2016. Commercial fishermen will not be able to retain, catch or land bass until April, from April to July fixed nets are permitted with a quota of 1,300 kg and after 31st July drift netting is permitted with a 1,000 kg quota. Recreational fishermen can operate catch release until 31st July with a limit of one bass per man per day after that date.

Cefas has been carrying out a tagging study on bass and additional funding is now available to extend the study to the North West area.

RESOLVED. To receive the report.

35 **SCIENCE REPORT (Agenda Item 8)**

The report covered
Assessment of Fishing Activities in European Marine Sites
Moorside Power Station
Technical Advisory Group (TAG)

Further discussion took place on the following items.

MCZ – Tranche Two Designations. Two sites in the Cumbria area have been designated:

1. Allonby Bay: Conservation objective 'to maintain'
2. West of Walney: extends into 6-12 mile zone so cross-boundary site, 'recover' objective.
3. Senior Scientist will circulate MMO guidance on sites.
4. Mud Hole, straddles the 12 mile limit to the south West off St. Bees Head is expected to be included in the Tranche Three work.

Cefas Report – Inshore Fisheries Activity Data Layer.

1. Project aims to improve the evidence base on the location and intensity of inshore fishing activities.
2. NWIFCA currently lacks inshore fisheries activity data for the under 12m vessels.
3. Data produced shows gaps in activity which may be a misrepresentation.
4. Concerns on circulation of the report and how it is to be used have been raised with Cefas.

European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) and iVMS (Inshore Vessel Monitoring System).

Trials on inshore vessel monitoring systems are underway.

Robust activity data for the District is needed and final tests on a package which it is hoped will be suitable are being carried out.

UK funding allocation from EMFF has been announced. The fund will be administered by the MMO. Fishermen are encouraged to apply. Mr Ward said the MMO will assist. Information is available on the MMO website.

Mr Jones said that iVMS has been trialled extensively on the Welsh scallop fishery. Vessels are required to have iVMS to comply with the Wales Scallop Order.

The Chairman said iVMS will increase accountability when working in designated sites.

North West Coastal Connections – National Grid work on routing options for 400KV cables from Moorside nuclear power station. The Senior Scientist attended the stakeholder reference group on 27th January and facilitated fishing meetings to discuss the survey work. The tunnel under the Bay is the preferred option. Surveys initially delayed because of poor weather were carried out at a time when they conflicted with fishing activity. The surveys will continue until spring and Ms Knott will make sure that fishermen's concerns are fully documented. She will attend the next meeting on 4th February. It is understood that the tunnel will come up north of Heysham harbour and not near the mussel skears as feared but clarification will be sought on this point.

Cumbria Wildlife Trust Marine Trainees Partnership. Mr Jones referred to the agreement between NWIFCA, Natural and CWT not to continue the Heysham Flat *Sabellaria alveolata* condition monitoring and asked if this would be monitored in other parts of the District. Ms Knott said that focus would now switch to the *Sabellaria alveolata* within the Cumbria Coast MCZ. Monitoring of Heysham would be reinstated if the situation should change.

Morecambe Bay Cockle Fisheries. Mr Manning asked about the current situation with the Leven Island cockle bed. Ms Knott reported that surveys will be carried out at the next available opportunity. She outlined the process that needs to take place in order to regulate and open a fishery. Part of that process includes carrying out HRAs.

RESOLVED. To receive the report.

36 A.O.B. (Agenda Item 9)

1. Emergency Byelaw

The TSB considered an Emergency Byelaw proposed by officers in response to reports of imminent dredging for razor clams in the Cumbria area. The proposed byelaw will prohibit dredging without written authorisation from the NWIFCA. At present there is no protection in place for such activity north of Haverigg Point in the old Cumbria SFC District. Comments received from MMO will be incorporated in the byelaw. Members approved implementation of the Emergency Byelaw which will remain in force for 12 months during which time a new byelaw will be created to cover the whole of the NWIFCA District.

RESOLVED. To approve implementation of the Emergency Byelaw (Restrictions on Fishing for Bivalve Molluscan Shellfish)

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 1235 hours